

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02
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/125 W

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R 060814Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7776
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E O 11652: NA
TAGS: XF, TC
SUBJ: UAE MEDIA REACTIONS TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S LONDON SUNDAY
TIMES INTERVIEW

1. FOR PAST THREE SUCCESSIVE DAYS UAEG-OWNED DAILY AL-ITTIHAD
HAS CARRIED EDITORIALS STRONGLY CRITICAL OF PRESIDENT'S REPORTED
REMARKS TO JOURNALIST TRUDE FELDMAN. OUR LOCAL EMPLOYEES CONSIDER
CRITICISM OF US POLICY IN THESE EDITORIALS TO BE AMONG SHARPEST
THEY HAVE SEEN SINCE CARTER ADMINISTRATION TOOK OFFICE.

2. UNDER HEADLINES DECLARING "CARTER: BEGIN'S DRAFT IS THE
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BASIS FOR THE SETTLEMENT", AL-ITTIHAD ON MAY 1 COMMENTED THAT
IF US PRESIDENT SAYS BEGIN'S PLAN IS BASIS FOR MIDEAST SETTLE-
MENT, "HOW CAN BEGIN BE ACCUSED OF RIGIDITY OR STUBBORNNESS?
HOW CAN ISRAEL BE EXPECTED TO ACCEPT CONCEPT OF A PALESTINIAN
STATE IF CARTER DENIES IT?" EDITORIAL SUGGESTS THAT PRESIDENT
HAS REVERSED HIMSELF ON QUESTION OF SUPPORT FOR A HOMELAND FOR
THE PALESTINIANS AND CONCLUDES SARCASTICALLY PRESIDENT NEED

NOT REALLY WORRY ABOUT ISRAEL'S SECURITY AS DISUNITY AND IN-ACTION AMONG ARABS THEMSELVES ARE BEST GUARANTEE OF THIS.

3. MAY 2 EDITORIAL COMPARES PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT WITH FAMOUS BALFOUR DECLARATION AS "AN IMPORTANT TURNING POINT IN HISOTRY OF ISRAEL'S EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE ITS EXPANSIONIST DREAMS". EDITORIAL CONTINUES: "THE AMERICAN STAND HAS BECOME VERY CLEAR: IT SUPPORTS BEGIN'S PLAN FOR THE WEST BANK AND THUS CARTER HAS REACHED STAGE OF SIDING FULLY WITH ISRAEL...EVEN TO EXTENT THAT ARAB OIL IS GIVEN LOWER PRIORITY THAN SECURITY OF ISRAEL." IN INSIDE PAGE SAME PAPER, COMMENTATOR ASKS WHAT IS MEANING OF VISITS TOO MIDEAST OF CARTER, VANCE AND ATHERTON IF USG POLICY IS TO SUPPORT BEGIN PLAN AS SOLUTION TO THE PROBLAM.

4. MAY 3 EDITORIAL COMMENTS ON SADAT MAY DAY SPEECH THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE TO SEE IT AS FRUITFUL STEP TOWARD HEALING RIFTS IN ARAB RANKS IF EGYPTIAN LEADER HAS "GONE THE WHOLE WAY TO RENOUNCE HIS EFFORTS TO CONVINCE ISRAEL OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PEACE. THESE EFFORTS HAVE GONE ON FOR FIVE MONTHS WITHOUT DISCERNMENT ON HORIZON OF ANY SIGN OF ISREAL'S READINESS TO RESPOND TO HIS HISTORIC INITIATIVE." WRITER ADDS THAT WORLD WILL NOT BLAME SADAT FOR DESISTING AS IT INCREASINGLY OBVIOUS ISRAEL WILL NOT CHANGE ITS POSITION AND IS ONLY BUYING TIME. "DOES PRESIDENT SADAT EXPECT ANY CHANGE IN THE AMERICAN POSITION? THE AMERICAN POSITION HAS BECOME CLEAR THAT IT LEAVES NO ROOM FOR HOPE IT WILL INFLUENCE THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, AS THE RECENT UNCLASSIFIED

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STATEMENTS OF PRESIDENT CARTER HAVE WELL SHOWN. IT IS NOW OBVIOUS TO ALL THQT AMERICAN INFLUENCE IS NOTHING BUT DREAMDUST. WHAT CARTER SAID TO THE ARABS AT ASWAN HE BLOWS AWAY WITH BEGIN AT THE WHITE HOUSE." EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT ARABS NOW EXPECT FROM SADAT ANOTHER INITPATIVE COMPARABLE TO HIS TRIP TO JERUSALEM AND HIS LAUNCHING OF THE 1973 WAR -- THIS INITIATIVE MUST REUNIFY THE ARAB RANKS AND RESTORE ARAB MILITARY CAPABILITY TO WHAT IT WAS IN OCTOBER 1973.

5. COMMENT: WE DO NOT NORMALLY REPORT EDITORIAL COMMENTHIN UAE PRESS, WHETHER GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR PRIVATELY PUBLISHED, AS IT MORE OFTEN REFLECTS VIEWS OF ARAB EXPATRIATE WRITERS THAN OF SENIOR UAE LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER, IN THIS CASE WE BELIEVE EDITORIALS REFLECT DISMAY AND UNCERTAINTY FELT BY MANY LOCAL ARABS AS WELL OVER WHAT THEY SEE AS SUDDEN AND INEXPLICABLE RE-EMPHASIS BY PRESIDENT ON US-ISRAELI SECURITY RELATIONSHIP AND ON PURPORTED AREAS OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN US AND ISRAELI POLICIES TOWARD FUTURE OF PALESTINIANS AND FUTURE OF WEST BANK. WE HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO GET INTO HANDS OF KEY UAE OFFICIALS, ESPECIALLY SHAIKH ZAYID'S PRESS ADVISOR ZAKI NUSEIBAH, COPIES OF FELDMAN ARTICLE AS WELL AS OF CLARIFICATIONS ISSUED BY WHITE HOUSE AND DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN. WE HAVE ALSO SENT ALONG EXCEELLENT SUMMARY

OF US POSITION CONTAINED IN ROY ATHERTON'S HARVARD CLUB SPEECH
WITH SUGGESTIONS THAT THESE STATEMENTS BE LOOKED AT AS A WHOLE
BEFORE UAE OFFICIALS DRAW ANY MISTAKEN CONCLUSIONS THAT THERE
HAVE BEEN ANY DRAMATIC SHIFTS IN USG POLICY SINCE BEGIN'S
ARRIVAL IN US.
DICKMAN

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